



Learning Forward, the international association of learning educators focused on increasing student achievement through more effective professional learning, requests six technical amendments and four substantive changes to the definition of professional development included in the bill to reauthorize the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* passed by the Senate HELP Committee. The changes specified in the Table 1 bring the definition of professional development in alignment with research on what constitutes effective professional learning and international [Standards for Professional Learning](#) developed in coordination with 41 leading international organizations¹. Furthermore, the amendments streamline the language, increase coherence, and increase local control and responsibility for implementing effective professional development that improves student achievement through enhanced teaching.

In addition to the amendments to the definition of professional development in Sec. 9101(45), Learning Forward strongly recommends inserting a requirement that recipients of Title II, Part A funds evaluate the impact of federal funds that support professional development.

Sec. 2141(b)

Insert the following after Sec. 2141(b)(4).

“(5) the impact of professional development provided to educators and school personnel funded under this Act on improving practice against recognized professional standards and student achievement.”

¹ Standards Revision Task Force and the Standards Advisory Team includes representation from the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of School Administrators, American Association of School Personnel Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, American School Counselor Association, ASCD, Association of Teacher Educators, Council of Chief State School Officers, Learning Forward, NASSP, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Education Association, National Governors Association, National Middle School Association, National School Boards Association, Parent Teacher Association, Phi Delta Kappa, U.S. Department of Education, American Institutes for Research, Asia Society, Australian Professional Teachers Association, Center for Teaching Quality, Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium, Florida Department of Education, International Reading Association, International Society for Technology in Education, Learning Forward British Columbia, London Center for Leadership in Learning at the University of London, Michigan Department of Education, National Alliance of Black School Educators, National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, National Science Teachers Association, Rose and Smith Associates, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Inc., University of Central Florida, University of Minnesota, University of Nevada at Las Vegas, and University of Pennsylvania.

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Every educator engages in effective professional learning every day so every student achieves.

Table 1

Senate Manager’s Amendment with Redline	Rationale
<p>“(48)” (45) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.—The term ‘professional development’ means evidence-based learning processes that are designed and implemented activities based on scientifically valid research that are coordinated and aligned to increase the effectiveness of educators (including teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, school librarians, and, as applicable, early childhood educators) and student achievement are regularly assessed to determine the activities’ effectiveness, and that—</p>	<p>SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE: Learning Forward requests defining the term professional development as “evidence-based learning processes.” Professional development is the process by which educators develop knowledge, skills, and abilities and translates the learning into improved practice. There is a solid evidence-base that informs the structure of professional development that results in improved teaching and increased student achievement.</p>
<p>“(A) are designed and implemented to improve student achievement and classroom practice;</p>	<p>TECHNICAL CHANGE: Learning Forward recommends striking section (45)(A) as the reference to improved student achievement and classroom practice was inserted in (45) above</p>
<p>“(B) are aligned with—</p>	<p>TECHNICAL CHANGE: Section renumbered to reflect deletion of redundant section.</p>
<p>“(i) State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards developed under section 1111(a)(1);</p>	<p>No change.</p>
<p>“(ii) related academic and school improvement goals of the school, local educational agency, and, as appropriate, statewide goals and local curricula; and</p>	<p>TECHNICAL CHANGE: Language is streamlined to improve clarity. The reference to curricula is implied in revised section (45)(A).</p>
<p>“(iii) rigorous teaching professional standards; and</p>	<p>TECHNICAL CHANGE: Learning Forward requests replacing the term “teaching standards” with “professional standards” to make this section more inclusive of principal standards, teacher leader standards, and other professional standards defined by the field.</p>
<p>“(iv) areas for improvement based on such educators’ evaluations;</p>	<p>TECHNICAL CHANGE: Learning Forward requests moving section (45)(D) to (45)(A)(iv).</p>

<p>“(CB) increase improves educators’ knowledge, skills, and practice through—</p>	<p>TECHNICAL CHANGE: Learning Forward strongly recommends transforming this section into a description of the processes by which educators improve their skills and practice. The three essential characteristics listed in section (45)(B)(i-iii) align to research on effective professional learning. Previously the language referenced the content knowledge educators ought to learn. Learning Forward believes that decisions on the content of professional development educators engage in is best made at the school, district, and state levels based on a rigorous evaluation of student achievement data.</p>
<p>“(i) facilitated team-based learning at the school level;</p>	<p>SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE: Learning Forward strongly requests adding (45)(B)(i). This section includes three critical elements: 1.) skillful facilitation, 2.) team-based, and 3.) school-based. Effective professional learning is</p>
<p>“(ii) job-embedded, classroom-based follow-up and support; and</p>	<p>SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE: Learning Forward strongly requests adding (45)(B)(ii). Research on effective professional learning demonstrates that follow-up and support by instructional coaches and school leaders increases the transfer of new knowledge and skills into practice. Effective classroom-based practice will result in improved student achievement.</p>
<p>“(iii) designated time for collaborative learning during the work week;</p>	<p>SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE: Learning Forward strongly requests adding (45)(B)(iii). This section includes two essential elements: 1.) designated time for collaborative learning and 2.) during the work week. Research demonstrates that the most effective school systems create protected time for educators to reflect and develop their knowledge, skills, and practice. In order to be effective, the protected time must occur often and consistently. This protected time for professional learning is in addition to negotiated planning/preparation time in collective bargaining agreements.</p>
<p>“(C) addresses as appropriate--</p>	<p>OPTIONAL LANGUAGE: This section was included in the Manager’s Amendment.</p>
<p>“(i) knowledge and understanding about how students learn;</p>	<p>Learning Forward recommends striking all language from (C)(i-vi). This proposed change helps to streamline the definition and eliminate redundancy. We believe that the “content” of professional learning is best determined at the local level based on a rigorous analysis of student achievement data.</p>
<p>“(ii) academic and pedagogical content knowledge;</p>	
<p>“(iii) ability to analyze student work and achievement data from multiple sources, including how to adjust instructional strategies, assessments, and materials based on such analysis; and</p>	

<p>“(iv) ability to instruct students with disabilities and English learners so that they are able to meet the State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards;</p>	
<p>“(D) address areas for improvement based on such educators’ evaluations;</p>	
<p>“(E) are job embedded, ongoing, collaborative, data-driven, and classroom focused; and</p>	
<p>“(F) are, as appropriate —</p>	
<p>“(iv) designed to provide educators with the knowledge and skills to work more effectively with parents and families; and</p>	
<p>“(ivi) provided jointly for school staff and other early childhood education and care providers, where applicable, to address the transition to elementary school, including issues related to school readiness across all major domains of early learning.</p>	